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TO LIVE AND THINK LIKE PIGS

NECROPOLITICS CAPITALISM, CLASS, DIVIDIUM, LUXURY, NEOLIBERALISM, POOR

The title of the article was borrowed from Gilles Châtelet's book "To Live and Think Like Pigs: The Incitement of Envy and Boredom in Market Democracies". Regarding this friendly takeover, think of Deleuze/Guattari's confession that they only quote those they love.

To which maxim, which calls for a different life instead of the swinish life, does Châtelet refer in his book? Always unfold a space that gives justice to all and that reinforces your own inclinations. Taking up an inclination, or as Tiqqun say, a *forme-de-vie*, concerns not only the

inclination itself and knowledge, but it concerns thought, its differentiation and enhancement. Those who do not understand this maxim live like pigs. The neoliberal pig wants, if possible, to shape everything in such a way as to reduce it to a possible profit; it wants everything precisely labelled, priced and consumable, but in the end all its desires, strategies and projects are directed towards increasing the productivity and profitability of its own human capital. (Which it still fails to recognise as freedom, because it is capital as a social relation or system that sets the constraint of profit maximisation via competition. Consequently Adorno: “The signature of the age is that no human being, without all exception [...] can determine his or her own life any more.”). To live differently, according to Châtelet, is to discover unknown dimensions of existence, or as Rimbaud says, to define the vertigo. We need the vertigo, but we also need the form. But one does not need ethics for that. De comrades of the American magazine “Hostis” write about this: “If the abandonment of ethics leaves one disturbed, it is because ethics is a very personal matter. Today, to be ethical is not even to be reformist – it is to have a politics that pays homage purely to fantasy, a living role-play of those who mean “well”. The sphere of ethical life consists of a world of braggarts and creeps who only look to others to prove to themselves that they personally have made the right choice. Ethics exploits for itself the power of active intentions while leaving the systemic destruction of globally integrated capital completely intact. In other words, it is fuelled by the elitism of being better than others.”

So what is the maxim for right thinking? For Châtelet, thinking sleeps in the temporal continuum, but there are always singularities waiting to be reactivated, to invent virtualities in the folds of time that can be discovered and accepted. The maxim of non-piggish thinking is: activate your virtuality! (For Deleuze, virtuality is not everything possible, but what is possible, was possible or will be possible in a specific time-space. The virtual has enormous effects in the real, and at the same time, because of its connection to empirical causal mechanisms, the virtual always proves to be an effect of an effect. It functions as an incorporeal quasi-causality, whereby the virtual can also remain inactive and thus assume the status of a reserve). To think like a pig, on the other hand, is to kill off virtuality, indeed childhood, within oneself and to imagine that one is always a well-balanced person, that is, a nobody. Paradoxically, this kind of nobody constantly focuses its attention only on itself. The swinish mind does not look for meanings for its existence, but always for the exactness of its dimensions. Châtelet, on the other hand, calls for something quite different: “Be the dandy of your ambiguities, and if you are afraid of losing yourself, then keep only that which transcends you. Be the rebel-in-person, as Laruelle puts it. Or let’s take a remark by Félix Guattari: “The work of revolutionaries does not consist at all in promoting words, in having things, or in transporting or transmitting models and images. Their task is to tell the truth without exaggeration or trickery. But how can this search for truth be recognised? It’s very simple and it always works: the revolutionary truth is something that doesn’t piss you off, something you want to be involved in, that takes away your fear, that gives you strength, that strengthens your inclinations, no matter what, even if it kills you. Truth is not identical with theory or organisation. The theory and the organisation begin when the truth appears.”

So what does all this have to do with what is now commonly called “neoliberalism”? Philip Mirowski, in his book “The Undead Live Longer. Why Neoliberalism is Even Stronger After the

Crisis”, Philip Mirowski traces a new neoliberal form of subjectivation, an entrepreneurial self (which we call a dividend) equipped with changing identities and surrounded by simulacra of other such beings. This entrepreneurial self understands every conceivable happiness or unhappiness as the consequence of risks it has taken itself and for which it is responsible, as the consequence of correct or incorrect investment decisions. Thus, the discursive mouthpieces of the new middle class sound that today one can freely choose between these or those strategies and things under all circumstances, although all decisions practically always amount to the same thing, namely that they are ultimately executed by the market. In order to imagine oneself as an individual, difference must therefore be permanently injected into one’s own performance. The trick of neoliberalism is simply to sell this kind of freedom programme, namely the possibility to choose among thousands of risks and commodities, as a strategy and position against encrusted and ossified systems. But if one perceives the compulsion to which one is subjected as freedom, then nothing more than the end of freedom is announced.

Today, we can start from two overlapping processes of subjectivation: Individuation and Dividuation. Digital labour is fragmented; the individual – itself a cellular form – undergoes a recombinant fragmentation in cellular and at the same time recombinable segments in the digitalised production processes, which, from the point of view of financial capital, present themselves as a continuous flow of money capital flows. It is not only a question of labour relations themselves becoming precarious, but also of the continuous division, and possibly even dissolution, of the more productive agent, labour power. It is quite clear that, as cells of productive time, dividers can be constantly remobilised and recombined in fragmented forms of labour processes. We are dealing with an immense growth of depersonalised labour time, insofar as capital is increasingly moving from hiring the worker for eight hours to hiring various temporary labour packages in order to recombine them (out- and crowdsourcing) – and this precisely independently of their interchangeable and thus more or less random carrier. The “self” fluctuates as a fluid residual ego and is recombined in ever new relations, and Ulrich Bröckling compares this formation to a kaleidoscope “that shows a new pattern every time it is shaken.”

According to Mirowski, it was Foucault who was the first left-wing intellectual (with all his limitations) to pay attention to the debates of liberal and neoliberal academic circles, think tanks and other organisations, starting with those of the German ordoliberals and ending with those of the Chicago School around Milton Friedman, whereby Foucault paid comparatively little attention to, of all people, the foster father of the neoliberals, Friedrich Hayek (Hayek functions primarily as a connector of the two doctrines). One could now say, with Foucault, that the fragmentation and division takes place via the entrepreneurial shaping of one’s own person, which is supposed to have a multiplicity of enterprises that flow into one another. The neoliberal subject is capital, source of income and producer for itself, according to Foucault. No matter what it does, its entrepreneurial activities are to be extended beyond the economy qua competition and investment to all social fields. Validity and ought flow into each other. According to Foucault, the model of homo economicus, who now finally becomes completely governable as a well-constructed piece of human capital, thus concerns not only the economic actor, but a general actor who, for example, maintains his love life like a dating machine (maximising the return on

investment in feelings, time and money), who calculates the benefits of crime or who evaluates his friendships as he is evaluated and assessed in his jobs. He is no longer a classical entrepreneur, but as human capital is subject to the multiplication of the corporate form across all social spheres. As a subject to be capitalised, he finally has to invest in himself in such a way that his capital or portfolio value increases in all social fields and/or investors become aware of his creditworthiness.

He condenses himself into a bundle of mental characteristics, whereby his calculus of interests becomes embedded in an extremely loquacious economy of feeling. In his text on neoliberalism, Mirowski quotes, for example, a talk therapist: "Whether someone knows what he's talking about doesn't matter, as long as he's willing to talk a lot." Sovereign action, which tends to be destroyed by digitalised labour, must be constantly reconstructed by simulating it, through the interplay of semiologies, contagious communication and the cognition that complements them, this play taking place in the mode of endless sleep that Kroker/Weinstein have described as postmodern ideology: "I could stay here forever and keep talking to you." This is the attitude of those people who hang out at MC Donald's: the ideal speech community that already exists but has been overlooked by "critical theory." Moreover, the neoliberal refrain (Communicate! Act like an entrepreneur! Become an asset! Carry a risk!) equips dividends with functional, efficient relations so that they can survive in capitalised space-times and in competition with other players. You just have to place the buzz on the internet at the right time, do the stubborn repetition in the early stages of a marketing campaign and you need a strategy for the waning interest at the end of the campaign. Everything becomes a stupid anecdote, can be updated at any time to be deactualised as a sign at the same time.

According to Hayek, the market is the optimal information processor driven by competition (and not by exchange), the complex and the invisible, the one that functions perfectly well for all eternity. For Foucault, it must be constantly reconstructed as the site of veridiction, the production and circulation of truths. But where such perfect competition, instructed as norm and truth, prevails, there is actually no more competition. The belief of the cybernated thermostat citizen, as Châtelet calls the self-regulating neoliberal subject, negates the fact that the perfect communication corresponding to perfect competition no longer communicates anything, there is perfect transparency, although in the age of the excess of data there is an asymmetry of access to data. The Hobbesian Robinson particles, as Chatelet calls the classical liberal subjects of law, mutate in neoliberalism into semi-peaceful people who find themselves in two camps: That of supply and that of demand, organised by a processor that constantly establishes equilibrium prices, i.e. everyone benefits from the instantaneous and free information that supposedly makes all speculation and overreaching impossible. In reality, however, it is precisely neoliberal capitalisation or financialisation that has produced an economic model for practices that affect companies, households and states alike and that demand comprehensive risk management for investments and speculations in order to increase the capital and portfolio values as well as the ratings and rankings of the respective actors. This also implies that, at least in theory, everything can mutate into the raw material and model for the market and the underlying for the derivative, whereby the current thing can be replaced at any time by a better, more volatile matter that

enables an even faster shortcut from money to more-money. And this in a system of fades and superpositions: A table may be a thing for providing a meal, but when factors such as interest to be paid on the loans of the company producing the tables, options and insurance on the price of wood, and finally currency fluctuations are superimposed with the corresponding factors in production, and this in the context of the production of further goods and services, a global feast of monetary capital is placed over the extremely humble table (as a physical object).

The possibility of profiting in the long run by making one's own risk management more effective consists more than ever in the continuous exploitation of arbitrage (including the exploitation of the arbitrage of others, the exploitation of the smallest differences that generate volatility), and this as a privileged way of financialised subjectivation. Such structured and motivated arbitrage trading enables the denial of dependency (vis-à-vis corporations and states), which now wants to be experienced and at the same time celebrated exclusively as liberating competition that can be exploited individually-sovereignly, as if this competition could be measured solely from the perspective of individually controllable inputs and outputs, or to put it slightly differently, some win, some lose. And this in turn means that some are saved while others are discarded or trampled. Shit happens. Current financialised biopolitics include the constant modulation of risk and the statistical sorting of the population into those who are successful in the face of risk and those who are definitely not – and that is what being at-risk means. This is cribbed from the competitive mechanisms of individual capitals, where the aim is to out-compete the other individual capitals. Freedom is the murky brew in which the market behaviour of companies and subjects is reflected.

Categories such as profit, surplus value and capital, as well as the concept of class, thus disappear from the discourses; instead, risk is chosen as a general imperative for action, although for the neoliberals it is ultimately always the market that decides on individual risk management; at the same time, poverty is first personalised and then criminalised. Risk is first an actuarial concept; fixed categories must be assigned to the people to be insured in order to then calculate probabilities. This is different in neoliberalism. Here, risk functions as a guiding value to be surrendered to, as it were, and is only surpassed by that of freedom. As the trademark of the entrepreneur, who no longer needs to weigh probabilities, it is therefore necessary to surrender in pure ecstasy to risk and the market that controls it, but a market that exceeds everything we are capable of thinking and to which we assign a strange surplus of trust, as perhaps the clergy once did with God. Unconditional surrender to risk, which, however, is ultimately shaped by the market like an invisible hand and at the same time requires unconditional competition, is considered the most important method of changing identity and maximising the exploitation of one's own life. As Mirowski writes: "It borders on bullshit to extol the virtues of a market that offers people what they want, if at the same time you ascribe to them the urge to become the kind of person who wants precisely what the market offers him." Risk is a drug that promises you paradise, just grab it. Initially, this has little to do with the economic structures of capital; it is a discursive construct of the neoliberals that not only places the relations between state, politics, subject and economy under the dominance of economisation and market rationality, but also wants to transform spheres, things and desires that have not yet been economised into

processes of capitalisation. And this has consequences that Adorno, for example, foresaw far-sightedly: “With the dissolution of liberalism, the actual bourgeois principle, that of competition, has not been overcome, but has passed from the objectivity of the social process into the nature of the atoms pushing and shoving each other, as it were into anthropology.” It is still important to note (also against Foucault) that it is not primarily neoliberal governmental rationality and reason, but capital in the last instance that structures, constitutes and dominates today’s worlds and subjects through its operations, mechanisms and strategies. And in this respect, the risk-taking and at the same time responsible investment in the entrepreneurial subject means its submission to capital, the state and technologies. Inevitably, self-preservation and self-valorisation in the sense of maintaining and increasing one’s own creditworthiness must be subordinated to the governance of the state and the health of capital and its growth imperatives and financialisation requirements, its conjunctures and crises, its bubble formations and accumulation movements.

If the market points downwards, this is based on false assessments by the risk actors, whose failure is always self-inflicted. Citizens are constantly motivated to run their own lives like a portfolio, and once life collapses, the individual is demonised. Just as the duty to fit into the national community once persisted as a mute compulsion, today it is the practice of risk management that insists as a mute compulsion (although the former does not disappear). The ideal type of entrepreneurial actor, however, not only does everything voluntarily and without coercion, he may even imagine himself in rebellion against the system, but this kind of gamble simulates life for the purpose of practice, with which one surrenders oneself entirely to market processes. Adorno was not entirely unaware of this connection either. As a mere agent of socialisation, that is, integrated into a total functional context, which means the substitutability of all by all, for Adorno the individual must at the same time be creative and flexible. Due to the substitutability of all by all, the individual has become objectively meaningless, but in its isolated being-for-itself, it remains a monad that must above all take care of its own self-preservation and self-exploitation.

The increase in risk subjects today requires profit-oriented insurance companies that categorise and normalise risk subjects, and from this point of view, it is by no means a matter of ecstatically risk-affirming subjects that are otherwise so propagated. Indeed, insurance companies collect data based on a fairly standard definition of risk, sorting, hierarchising and pricing risk subjects according to criteria such as income, family background, occupation, place of residence, gender and education. While people are persistently engaged in their creative reformation, constantly reinventing themselves creatively in freedom (creativity was already denounced as a pseudo-normative empty formula in the 1960s, Topitsch), the insurance companies regard them as stereotypical protagonists who live an ordinary life as they always have, possibly that of the “job advertisement come to life, a successful synthesis of all the character traits that personnel managers and elementary school teachers want in a person.” (Pohrt) While the risk-taking subjects, especially from the middle class, permanently celebrate themselves for having broken the shackles of encrusted identities, they are extremely efficiently scanned and classified by insurance companies and other control firms that try to make themselves invisible. The upwardly mobile middle class – economically upwardly, culturally downwardly oriented – finds this chic,

and some of its representatives, who occupy certain functions in the insurance companies themselves, even manage to outdo each other in the highness of hedging, in the course of a fast-moving spewing of functions, formulas and slogans, plus the almost orgiastic pull that a panic report on Bloomberg or Reuters can achieve. (Whether in a city centre street, an underground station or a group of work colleagues, the perfection of the surveillance dispositif is precisely the absence of the surveillant, according to Tiqqun).

Not only have the techniques for modulating dividends increased, but also those for extracting profits even from the failure of the isolated. The existence of risk-taking subjects requires a control structure (statistics, tables and taxonomies) that classifies and classifies subjects according to risk categories, sorted by all possible criteria for the purpose of creating a risk profile. Mirowski again: "While the actors congratulate themselves on having repeatedly broken the shackles of identity, the control companies persistently pursue them through time and space as identical persons." Companies and individuals are no longer checked for creditworthiness on the concrete individual case, but on the basis of the creation of uniform quantitative indices. Credit control by examining the individual case is replaced by credit control by means of the creation of risk profiles. For companies, this is done by the three major rating agencies, and for consumers, the Fico Score was introduced, an algorithm that serves as the main statistical tool for controlling the neoliberal subject. The subject is classified according to the above-mentioned criteria, and points are assigned to these, weighted and combined into a credit score in order to use the total score to determine, for example, credit allocations. Insurance companies use the Fico Score to construct the credit histories of their customers, companies use it to check job applications and look for the best possible location, health insurance companies use it to make forecasts as to whether patients are taking their medication properly, and gambling casinos use it to find out which guests are the most profitable. A network of rankings, ratings and other evaluation mechanisms permeates the social fields and applies to almost all activities and areas.

Consider, for example, the development of life insurance, which has become a tradable financial product through the methods of securitisation of securities. In the 1980s, companies emerged in the USA that used lump-sum payments to purchase policies for HIV patients. In this case, the insurance company takes over the premium payments of the sick person in the expectation that his or her imminent death will minimise the costs in relation to the sum insured. Today, the policies are bundled into asset-backed securities and sold to institutional investors, who need not be aware of the macabre exit policies. While even the terminally ill are encouraged to step up their entrepreneurial activities, the companies that securitise their policies only take calculated risks, i.e. based on actuarial categories and knowledge of fixed customer identities. In general, the frenzy for market readiness qua credit cards, student loans and mortgages requires, as a counterpart, the operationalisation of actuarial and mathematical quantities such as class membership and fixed identity, for the control of which very special panoptics are erected.

This risk subject, which has been set up in this way, is not passive, but must constantly move actively and strategically within the framework of its risk management, even calculating its future. This goes something like this: you can become anything you want, you just have to want it,

although Google tells you what you want to do right now and what you will do tomorrow, and believe me, you will do it. Reward or punishment is the result of a permanent management around the risks to be calculated. Mirowski describes risk as the oxygen of the entrepreneurial self, a small capital that is effectively and multiformly utilised in all areas of life. This necessarily requires that one understands ignorance and uncertainty as constitutive of one's life and its relations to the job, family, insurance and consumption. And the entrepreneurial self functions best when it helps an even more entrepreneurial self to make more money, when it indulges in risky mortgage transactions, gouges the easy economy on the internet, helps organise the absorption of everyday life through financialisation, speculates like a professional on the stock exchange, effectively raises its profile on Facebook, according to Mirowski. The neoliberal risk subject is simultaneously the company, the customer, the product and the raw material of his life. The distinction between consumer and producer dissolves here in favour of a subject that coincides with a small capital. The neoliberal risk subject has to treat its properties, projects, skills and abilities as capital and assets to be maintained, managed and increased. Including the liabilities that have to be managed. Of course, it is better to be on the side of the claims than on the side of the liabilities. Insurance is the necessary form to regulate the fluctuations that occur. Finally, the neo-liberal subject mutates into the plaything of derivative transactions, on which it hangs as it must simultaneously cultivate, consolidate and effectively manage them in the highest state of alert or flexibility. There is no fixed hierarchy between the various roles that have to be filled, but they are filled according to momentary requirements, and it is precisely this kind of flexibility that requires permanent self-control. Emotions, techniques and procedures change, and who actually orchestrates this is not entirely clear (think of Adorno and his remark about how impertinent it actually is to still say I), but an integral must continue to exist, however provisional it may be, if the neoliberal subject does not want to drift completely into the pathological. Opportunism consists simply in constantly exchanging the figures that manage this self in relation to itself, trying out new techniques, changing emotional attachments and affects according to the prospects of success. Integration and dissolution are the components in which this takes place.

Every lived experience is replaced by a conglomerate of lifestyles, where one has to endure the tension between a sense of belonging to a trend group and individuality, just in such a way that both characteristics can be short-circuited at certain moments. Tiqqun write: "French, excluded, woman, artist, homosexual, Breton, citizen, fireman, Muslim, Buddhist or unemployed: everything is right as long as everyone can blare the wonderful "I AM..." in this or that tone of voice and with a transfigured gaze into infinity." This is mostly just a matter of conjuring up one's own nothingness or, as David Foster Wallace says, of managing one's own insignificance, which is most successfully demonstrated today by celebrities A through C.

But think also of that banker who begins ultra-hectic isometric facial exercises, coveting the little strands of muscle that connect his eyeballs to his brain, until finally it hurts so beastly that the authentic life on his ivory forehead almost burns away, and he begins to symbolically chop or dismember the tingling hollowness of his own expert culture with a few confused blows through the air, gets up, goes to the toilet and masturbates into the ultra-flat, kidney-shaped stainless

steel sink, which is the art-technological outperformer of the luxury penthouse cabin on the 33rd floor of the Commerzbank building anyway. floor of the Commerzbank building. (The pursuit of individual happiness is now recognised as a universal right). The towers of glass and steel in which the financial markets condense into nodes are high-security wings of risk calculation. Permanent access, fast access. Brokers and sales managers normally calculate the impositions of acceleration and deceleration in monetary terms; there is clearly a risk involved in every conceivable trade, but none that is completely incalculable or beyond the scope of the risk to be managed. In terms of subjectification, this is represented by the obsessive manipulation of subjective acceleration techniques à la zen-oriented concentration training as well as the devoted economisation of one's own subjective time, and last but not least, brokers like to experiment with preparations such as Ciprexilex or Zanosar, although most of the players do not have any medical diagnoses of mental disorders. What is at stake here is the self-recognition, recursively produced in self-therapy, that one rightly indulges in a possessive individualism that fundamentally distinguishes one from other colleagues, for everyone is indeed unique, but unique in the sense of cynical self-valorisation that puts one's own censor on autopilot when it comes to the sadistic annihilation of the idea that one might have something to do with the narcissistically induced clichés or stereotypes of oneself. The investment that the individual makes in the individual, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work, the investment that the individual makes in the world of work.

Today, the investments that affect the individual extend into genetic manipulation. Neurotransmitters, organs, biological components, and somatic identities are being given up for barter. An all-encompassing enthusiasm for the freedom to constantly fillet one's body in terms of the monetary is demanded. The body mutates into a company that enters into mergers, think of implants, transplants and surgical procedures, and one makes sales with it, be it organs, blood or germ cells. There are people who, in the course of their self-tracking, equip their bodies with sensors and measure blood pressure, blood sugar levels and fat percentage around the clock and then put this data on the net. It is precisely this that leads to asomatognosia, a lack of knowledge about one's own body. The term refers to the loss of perception or the feeling of belonging to one's own parts. But those who fail completely are sent to a psychiatric rehabilitation programme, where it is stubbornly drummed into them that the only way to combat burnout is to increase their own entrepreneurship.

And all the time, the economic order is supposed to emerge about as naturally as the fittest species in the struggle for survival, while secretly a political arithmetic is propagated to domesticate the common man, the atomistic producer-consumer of goods and services. If life, as it is, is once again to be given a meaning that promises eternal freedom without alternatives, then submission to ant-like drudgery and mindless labour and renunciation must appear as self-inflicted, as a lack of competence or insufficient willingness to take risks that must be remedied

as soon as possible for each individual. On top of the silence of the masses, which is anything but harmless, the primitive economism of the middle class and the elites has been imposed, whose leading figures are the accountant and the huckster – every cent counts – who in turn are fuelled by an administrative spirituality that today is celebrated in particular by the inspectors of finance. From a subjective point of view, the hunt for every cent can be understood neither as greed nor as avarice alone. The depreciation of any kind of goodwill that accompanies it rather refers to the unconditional competition (once called “Kameraderie der Anrenpelei” by Adorno), in which panic is constantly mixed, a kind of latent melancholy mixed with a lot of madness. “Think positively, eliminate the problem and maximise (your capital value)” is the imperative of the global neoliberal middle class, which thus wants to enjoy the end of history in all its detail. Wolfgang Pohrt has noted the following about such a species: “Quite analogous to spoiled, fussy children whose unhappiness consists in eating whipped cream with chips and playing at the same time, while not really wanting any of these things, adults today do not as a rule suffer from unfulfillable longing – a suffering that also has its merits – but they suffer from a kind of desireless unhappiness that turns into an insatiable greed, because it is never fulfilled, of wanting to have everything and throw it away again right away. While the propagandists of a New Hedonism think they can recognise an unbroken joy of pleasure in the behaviour of the German middle class in particular, which could be seen as a huge self-help group that strives as doggedly as it does in vain to do something good for itself, be it by living nicer, drinking more elegantly or eating healthier, while the propagandists of a New Hedonism think they can recognise indicators of joy of pleasure in all these activities, they overlook the fact that the restless, compulsive, stressful and almost full-time search for enjoyment is the behaviour of people who can’t find it anywhere, of people, too, whose insatiable greed and eternal frustration eventually etch themselves into their features and who therefore don’t seem full, satisfied and happy, but hard, envious, lurking and bitter. “

Today’s dividend is to be constructed like a modular kit and nothing should stand in the way of its success. Fragmentation reaches its lonely climax when the dividend affirms that it is not only a temporary worker, employee or unemployed, but a product for sale, an advertising poster, a manager of its curriculum vitae, and is also allowed to imagine itself as an artist of its motivations. At the same time, the individual counts his or her own mediocrity as merit. From a temporal point of view, it is under the dictate of the future tense 2, of “it-will-have-been”. The past is regarded by it as a cost factor that must be reduced in the course of a calculation that is entirely oriented towards the future. Adorno also had a bad premonition in this respect: “The starting point is the consumers’ weakness of memory: no one is trusted to remember anything, to concentrate on anything other than what is offered to him at the moment. He is reduced to the abstract present. But the more narrow-minded the moment has to stand up for itself, the less it is allowed to be charged with misfortune.” Nothing else signifies the end of history on the level of the subject. At the same time, as Mark Fisher forcefully puts it in his book “Ghosts of My Life. Depression, Hauntology and the Lost Future”, the past, driven primarily by the pop industry, is now over-present. Any past is recapitulated, much like George A. Romero did in his classic zombie film “Night of the Living Dead”. When it gets too crowded for the dead in hell, they have to return to

earth. But this is only one side of temporalisation in neoliberal capitalism. The ominous occupation of the future by speculative capital, which at the same time corresponds to a monstrous annihilation of every anti-axiomatic surprise and virulence, can only be written from the future tense, although even this time wants to be overcome by capital again and again. Capital persists in rushing towards its future on the one hand, so that the present is per se measured against the future, and on the other hand in constantly overtaking its own future, the trauma par excellence, which wants to be caught up by the futurising capitalisation, which paradoxically at the same time relies on absolute self-presentness, and yet cannot be caught up. In this social situation, not only the economic processes but also the political and social movements seem to wander erratically and aimlessly, so that the arrow of time finally goes into a spin, even though the dictate of eternal youth continues to prevail. Alain Badiou has pointed out that there are only two possibilities regarding the signs of eternal youth for the subjects, namely, on the one hand, the burgeoning youthful terrorism due to demographic developments and underdeveloped areas where money circulation is only diminished, and on the other hand, the affirmation of the maxim “Have Fun” in the capitalist metropolises. In doing so, he certainly underestimates the compulsion, at least in the metropolises, to constantly model themselves as profit-oriented risk subjects. At the same time, however, in the metropolises the youthful design of life correlates with a production of death that Deleuze/Guattari have described as follows: “The only modern myth is that of the zombies – deadly schizos who, brought back to their senses, are good for work. In this sense, the savage and the barbarian, with their way of encoding death, represent children vis-à-vis modern man and his axiomatics (it takes so many unemployed, so many dead, the Algerian war kills no more than the weekend traffic accidents, than the planned murder in Bengal...). Modern man is even more delirious. His delirium is like a telephone system with thirteen telephones. He gives orders to the world. He does not love the ladies. He is also well-behaved. He is decorated with all his might. In man’s game, the death instinct, the silent instinct, is safely employed, perhaps alongside egoism. It takes the field of zero in roulette. The casino always wins. So does death.” The zombies described by Deleuze/Guattari are certainly not those of Romero, who creates the scenario of a city where the rich have taken up residence in a tower where they enjoy the ordinary luxuries while the masses below languish in squalor. This kind of class structure can only be maintained because the land is occupied by zombies who threaten any escape from the Tower with death. But Deleuze/Guattari’s zombies are also sitting in the Luxustower itself, shaping their lifestyles like digital dolls on the screens and at the same time going about their business as usual. Among them there is, in reality, another kind of zombie, but one that hardly threatens the luxury zombies in their world ghettos. It consists of the mass of labour nomads for whom global capital no longer has any use. It is a beautiful madhouse, life in late capitalism .

And what about those agents who have failed in the face of risk? Mirowski writes: “Since the nineties, not only the rich but almost everyone who still has a job has been following with electrifying schadenfreude how the enforcers of austerity are making thousands of cruel cuts in the welfare state. That the poor are no longer considered a class, as argued above, makes it easier to hate them. They are the refuse of the market. These miserable creatures, it is made

clear, live off our generosity. That is why they are the ones who owe us; and that is why we have every right to be spectators in the theatre of cruelty. In this dark pleasure, even low-income people learn to feel like rich people in an era of decline.”

Just as neoliberalism presupposes a willingness to self-valorise, so too does it presuppose a willingness to self-devalorise. The latter stems from the restructuring of social security systems and the existence of job centres, i.e. institutions that administer compulsory work and poverty. Retraining programmes and a gigantic industry of measures organise the state-subsidised humiliations. As material to be used at will, as persons from whom all need has been driven out, the poor are now subjected to constant harassment, coercion and duress by the state. Clients of labour institutions are fitted into team-based networks of so-called measures by which they are loosely tortured with meaningless courses and coaching, or clients are selectively coerced into accepting any dirty work, and if they do not parry, they are sanctioned, that is, driven into starvation. Temporary work agencies have the right to force clients to do almost any kind of work. An enormous apparatus of stultification, brutalisation and threat has emerged, a new panic industry has developed. Hartz IV initiated a development, at the end of which is not only the nationalisation of labour power, but the appropriation of the body as a biomass by the state, by the political sovereignty of total capital. Hartz IV and Agenda 2010 are the laboratories of panic. This is not at all about the well-founded fear that one can certainly have as a customer of the job centre and that one must somehow cope with. Rather, the state is concerned with exaggerating real fear into the fantastic and substituting fear with the panic of self-preservation. The production of panic wants the shock, and it produces nothing more than the Nazification of the citizen. Precisely because the citizen knows what he himself is capable of, he trusts his state with much more. The production of death becomes consumable again. And one last thing; Badiou brought it up recently: The young suicide bombers are also effects of a suppressed or impossible desire. If one persistently declares that another world is impossible, then these young people ask themselves why they have no place in this world. After all, if every other world is rejected as impossible, it does not seem tolerable at all to have no place in this world, no place that corresponds to the criteria of this world: consumption, comfort and money. It is precisely this frustration that opens up the space for the death instinct: what we want, we hate precisely because we cannot get it. It is precisely in the hatred of this world that the desire for this world shows itself.

translated by deepL.

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